DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 265 323 CE 043 260

TITLE	Dairy Health. Youth Training Scheme. Core Exemplar Work Based Project.
INSTITUTION	Further Education Staff Coll., Blagdon (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-948361-15-8
PUB DATE	84
NOTE	23p.; Portions printed on colored paper. For other guides in this series, see CE 043 245-288.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Animal Husbandry; Behavioral Objectives; *Career Education; Competency Based Education; Core Curriculum; *Dairy Farmers; Farm Occupations; Foreign Countries; Job Skills; Learning Activities; Learning Modules; On the Job Training; Postsecondary Education; Records (Forms); Veterinary Medicine; *Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS	England

ABSTRACT

This trainer's guide is intended to assist supervisors of work-based career training projects in helping students learn about dairy herd health, as well as how to gather, record, and interpret information. The guide is one in a series of core curriculum modules that is intended for use in combination on- and off-the-job programs to familiarize youth with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in the workplace. Included in the guide are the following components: project information, a summary of the content and approach of the guide, supervisor's notes, background information, lists of tasks and core skills, an action plan that includes suggested learning activities, supervisor and trainee review sheets, and an assessment form. (KC)

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Youth Training Scheme

CORE EXEMPLAR WORK BASED PROJECT

ED265323

Dairy health

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CE543260

OTF No: 2

PROJECT No: M|16

TYPE Individual

2

ESF
CORE SKILLS PROJECT
YTS

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ISBN 0-948361-15-8

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ASSESSMENT OF CORE SKILLS

This series of projects contains a number of different formats for recording assessment of core skills. These formats are offered for experimental purposes; none is proven as the 'best' method. All are based on the principle that feedback to trainees is a necessary part of the learning process and that such feedback should include information on core skill development.

Further work is being carried out on the methods of assessing achievement of core skills in work-based learning and of how to log such achievement on a record which trainees can take away from YTS. Some of the results of this work will be included in later MSC/ESF Core Skills Project publications.

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE WORK-BASED PROJECTS?

Work-based projects are learning materials which aim to make the most of all the possibilities for developing trainees' skills, knowledge and attitudes in the workplace. They build upon everyday workplace tasks to provide experience of the whole range of YTS learning opportunities.

The projects in this series have been tested with managing agents as part of the YTS Core Project, which is jointly financed by MSC and the European Social Fund. In some cases managing agents will be able to use the projects as they are. In others they will need to be adapted to the circumstances of a particular workplace or to the aims of a particular scheme. Some managing agents will prefer to produce their own projects. For such cases these examples aim to demonstrate some principles of good design in work-based learning materials. These principles are:

To encourage trainees to learn by doing
To make the most of all the experiences which are available to trainees in the workplaces.
To start from a real task which is seen as relevant by all parties involved — trainees, workplace supervisors, trainers and off-the-job tutors.
To help trainees see the relationships between things learnt on- and off-the-job.
To base the assessment of achievement upon trainees' actual performance in tasks.
To look for all the opportunities for learning which arise from a task and, in particular, to help trainees to develop the core skills. These skills, in number, communication, problem-solving and practical activities, are used in a wide variety of tasks and are essential if trainees are to achieve competence in those tasks*. They are the skills — of finding out information, planning how to do things, overcoming difficulties and so on — which help trainees to learn more quickly in new situations, either in the same workplace, in a different one, or in the world outside work.

Such skills are required naturally by the workplace tasks in these projects and, in requiring trainees to go beyond the task itself, the projects deliberately *add* to the range of core skills which are required in an everyday working situation. This is especially important for some of the skills of communication and problem-solving which trainees are often not given the opportunity to exercise in work experience.

These principles can be incorporated in projects for all placements and for trainees of all ability levels. Although the projects in this series follow a common format, there is no single 'best' style. Nor is any special expertise in writing necessary. Good work-based projects can be produced by anyone who is determined to help trainees to exploit all of the potential for learning in work experience.

*A technical manual 'Core Skills in YTS' is currently available from MSC. It is supported by a short introductory leaflet and a practitioner's guide for supervisors. A separate manual is available on computer literacy/information technology.

PROJECT INFORMATION

This particular project enables the trainee to find out a great deal about the health of a dairy herd. In addition it helps the trainee to develop the skills of planning, and of recording and intepreting information; in particular the trainee should be able to design a chart and record information thereon-a skill which is useful in many situations at work and outside employment. The project helps him/her to provide information in writing and to find out information from other people. She/he can also hardly avoid drawing conclusions concerning health education in general.

Lastly, this project will help the trainee to feel part of the team of workpeople on the farm and also help to develop in him/her a sense of responsibility and a feeling that she/he will be able to influence decisions even if only in a minor way.

It contains many of the essential features of any monitoring-type project. The trainee is asked to gather relevant information, to design a way of recording events, to interpret the results of the monitoring process, and to make recommendations which follow naturally from this. Thus, although the project was designed for use on a farm and has a specifically agricultural form, its principles could transfer to any situation in which trainees can be asked to monitor processes, tasks, or activities.

SUMMARY

The trainee is asked to study the health of a dairy herd. This will involve recording details of veterinary treatment and an analysis of the state of health of the herd.

SUPERVISOR'S NOTES

INTRODUCTION

This work based project is designed to focus the trainee upon the CORE SKILL areas of: number; communication; practical skills, and problem-solving. Wherever possible, it is also designed to provide learning opportunities to improve personal effectiveness; to provide wider knowledge of the world of work and elsewhere; and to furnish the trainee with skills which can be transferred to other situations.

The essence of the work based project is that people learn more quickly and effectively by actually doing something.

The following notes are designed to help you, your staff, and the trainee, so that the project can be carried out with a minimum of disruption to normal work activity.

1. Where relevant, please advise other staff that the trainee will be doing the project;

2. Please ensure that the trainee has read the project details and understands what is required;

3. Please ensure that the trainee is aware of any aspects of safety, hygiene or security which might touch upon the project;

4. Please ensure that the trainee appreciates that good planning will make the task easier. Wherever possible, and before the project starts, the trainee should be encouraged to take responsibility for his/her learning by estimating time, deciding on equipment and materials, identifying possible hazards and other problems, and generally "thinking the project through".

5. Upon completion of the project discuss with the trainee the activities he/she has been engaged in. What problems were there? What has he/she learnt? Would he/she tackle the project differently?

Encourage the trainee to complete the trainee's review page.

For this particular project you will find the following notes helpful.

TASK 1

The trainee may need advice on appropriate sources of information. Try and encourage him/her to find out as much as possible for him/herself. As this is quite a difficult task for the trainee, please try to set some time aside to talk over what he/she is doing.

TASK 2

Before advising the trainee as to what items should be included encourage him/her to make suggestions first. If she/he has done Task 1 properly she/he should have lots of suggestions.

You will probably need to give him/her firm advice on the duration of the monitoring exercise. The length of time will relate very much to conditions on the farm.

TASK 3

You should check from time to time that this is being done. The trainee may have difficulty in making sure all the events are included. Check to see that the recording is being done neatly.

TASK 4

It is important for trainees to gain some awareness of the costs of treatment, both preventive and corrective. Please allow the trainee to work out as much of this information for him/herself as possible.

TASK 5

The trainee may have to be guided somewhat with this task.

It is perhaps the most important task if it is done properly. Encourage the trainee to give his/her views and discuss them with him/her. Where the trainee comes up with suggestions that can be i plemented, please try to introduce them and let the trainee be involved. Where the trainee's suggestions are impractical, it is important that they know the reasons for this.

Names

TRAINEE .....

SUPERVISOR .....

TUTOR .....

Times

Please fill in the table below. This will show the time you spend on completing this project. The first column has been filled in as an example. Make another table if you need more space.

DATE	16/6			
START	1.30			
FINISH	3.00			
TIME SPENT (HOURS)	1½			

BACKGROUND

It is important for a farmer to have complete records covering details of the health of his/her dairy herd. She/he needs to know about veterinary visits, which animals are treated and the costs involved. She/he also needs to have a comparison worked out with previous years. As a result of this exercise it should be possible to come to certain conclusions about the health of the dairy herd.

SITUATION

ON THE FARM.

PURPOSES

This project should help you to learn more about factors which affect the health of the dairy herd on your farm.

Doing this project will enable you to learn more about agriculture. It will also help you to develop your CORE SKILLS (number, communication, problem-solving, and practical skills). Increasing your abilities in these skills will make it easier for you to change jobs and retrain when the need arises.

The tasks you are asked to do are outlined below, together with the most important CORE SKILLS that they contain. When you have finished each task, ask your supervisor to tell you how well she/he thought you did in the task, and record this on the Assessment Form near the back of this Project. This record will be needed to complete your Certificate at the end of your YTS year.

WBP TASK NO.	ACTIVITY	CORE SKILL
1.	Find out about and record the factors which affect the health of cows.	Plan how to find information. 9.7 Find out information from written sources. 6.2 Find out information by speaking to other people. 6.1 Provide information in writing, and by means of tables and diagrams. 7.3
2.	Design a chart on which to record data relevant to dairy health.	Plan how to present information. 9.6 Discuss with other people in the workplace how things are to be done. 8.6
3.	Monitor the health of the herd.	Monitor a process or activity. 11.2 Provide information in writing, and by means of tables and diagrams. 7.3 Find out information by speaking to other people. 6.1 Decide which category something belongs to. 10.2

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4.	Find out the costs involved in maintaining the health of a dairy herd.	Interpret numerical data or symbols in written or printed form.	2.1
		Work out numerical information.	1.2
5.	Analyse the results of your survey and draw conclusions from it.	Interpret numerical data or symbols in written or printed form.	2.1
		Provide information in writing, and by means of tables and diagrams.	7.3
		Discuss with other people in the workplace how things are to be done.	8.6

Each CORE SKILL is identified by number in the PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE to the YTS CORE, which contains advice and guidance on what CORE SKILLS are and their uses. The numbers are included here for ease of reference.

ACTION PLAN

Read and discuss this project with your tutor/supervisor before starting work on it. In any monitoring job you are asked to do, great attention must be paid to accurate and detailed recording of information.

TASK 1

This first task asks you to find out as much general information as you possibly can about factors likely to affect the health of dairy herds.

You will need to plan carefully how you are going to find out this information.

Read as much as you can about the subject. Ask your off-job tutor or supervisor for advice on what should be read.

A visit to the local library or agriculture centre might also provide you with valuable information on the subject. Take every opportunity to discuss the factors that affect the health of cows with the vet, farmer, and other experienced workers.

Make careful notes as these will be very valuable during the next part of the project.

TASK 2

Use the information you have found out to help you to design a chart on which you can record the health of the dairy herd you are working with. The chart will need to be designed in such a way as to allow you to monitor the health of each cow on a regular basis. Think about all the factors likely to affect the health of cows. Plan the layout of the chart carefully and note how you propose to monitor and record the information you will gather over the period of your survey.

This stage is very important. Show your chart to your supervisor or off-job-tutor and make sure he/she agrees with the items you have included and the general layout.

Discuss with your supervisor what the time span of the monitoring should be. It should cover a length of time to enable you to gather enough information to draw sensible conclusions about the health of the herd.

Decide where you are going to keep the chart. It should be in a clean and accessible place.

TASK 3

Record all the incidents of sickness and actions taken to maintain or improve dairy health as they occur. Be careful to record all the information correctly within the categories you have decided to use. Find out from everyone concerned all you can about the reasons why things are happening in the way they are. You should include all the information which you find out on your chart.

TASK 4

Using the records you have kept, note all the occasions when positive action was taken on the part of the farmer to maintain or improve the health of the herd.

How much does this cost?

Find out as much as you can about the costs involved. Some things such as food additives may need to be estimated but for others accurate costs can and should be obtained.

Record this information carefully and work out how much the farmer has spent to maintain or improve the health of the herd over the period of your survey.

Does the figure surprise you?

Discuss the costs involved with your supervisor.

TASK 5

When all the records are complete at the end of the time agreed for your survey, discuss them with your supervisor, other farmworkers, and, if possible, the vet. Make a note of their comments on what you have found out. Where possible, make comparisons with previous years and with national standards. Draw some sensible conclusions about the health of the herd and what could be done to improve it. For instance, what was the most common form of sickness you found? What causes this? What steps can be taken to remove the cause of sickness? Base your conclusions on the evidence you have gathered, and put them into a final report on your survey to your supervisor.

Discuss your ideas with your supervisor and see if he agrees. If he does, see if you can put them into operation to improve the health and performance of the herd.

TRAINEE REVIEW

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE AND DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR AND TUTOR.

1. Were you offered a selection of Projects to choose from? If so, why did you choose this one?

2. What did you think of it? Was it - easy, hard, interesting or boring?

3. What did you learn? (Look at the list of Purposes).

4. Did you learn something which was not on the list of Purposes?

5. Did you need help with any particular part of the Project? What kind of help did you get?

6. Were there any words in the Project that you did not understand? Please list them.

7. Do you think you could use what you learned in another job, or outside work?

8. Has this Project helped you decide whether you need further training in certain areas?

SUPERVISOR REVIEW

Please refer to Supervisor's Notes.

Please read the questions included under Trainee Review.

Please complete the Assessment Form and discuss your assessment with the trainee before initialling it to show that you both agree with the assessment.

COMMENTS:

ASSESSMENT
explanatory notes

In completing this wbp the trainee has the opportunity to demonstrate competence in the CORE SKILLS listed on the attached form.

The first two columns list the wbp Tasks and the CORE SKILLS which occur within them.

You are asked to assess the trainee's competence in these CORE SKILLS according to the amount of support from you that the trainee needed, for example:-

1) if a trainee is asked to "find information from written sources" and you provide the trainee with all the sources of that information, together with telling the trainee where to look in any particular source, then that trainee is obviously being given much more support in finding that information than a trainee who identifies the sources and extracts correct information unaided;

2) if a trainee is asked to undertake a task which involves "noticing the needs of customers or clients", and needs considerable prompting to approach a customer, then that trainee is obviously being given more support than a trainee who takes the initiative in approaching the customer.

To be regarded as fully competent in the CORE SKILLS, the trainee should need to be offered no more support than you would normally give to any experienced worker.

Most of the time job competence and CORE SKILLS competence are likely to be the same, but sometimes this may not be so. For instance, a trainee involved in machining a particular component may be competent so far as planning the work is concerned (a CORE SKILL), but may not have reached experienced worker speeds (an occupational skill).

Please tick the appropriate box and initial in the space provided, after you have discussed your assessment with the trainee and agreed any further training required.

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ASSESSMENT FORM

PROJECT TITLE DAIRY HEALTH WBP NO M/02/015 DATE

TRAINEE'S NAME SUPERVISOR'S NAME

WBP TASK NO	CORE SKILLS ASSESSED	NEEDED A LOT OF ASSISTANCE	NEEDED SOME ASSISTANCE	LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE		COMMENTS: INCLUDING NO OPPORTUNITY	AGREED INITIALS	
				NEEDS MORE PRACTICE	COMPETENT		TRAINEE	SUPERVISOR
1	9.7 Plan how to find information.							
1	6.2 Find out information from written sources.							
1 & 3	6.1 Find out information by speaking to other people.							
1, 3 & 5	7.3 Provide information in writing, and by means of tables and diagrams							
2	9.6 Plan how to present information.							
2 & 5	8.6 Discuss with other people in the workplace how things are to be done							
3	11.2 Monitor a process or activity							
3	10.2 Decide which category something belongs to							

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ASSESSMENT FORM
continued.

WBP TASK NO	CORE SKILLS ASSESSED	NEEDED A LOT OF ASSISTANCE	NEEDED SOME ASSISTANCE	LITTLE OR NO ASSISTANCE		COMMENTS: INCLUDING NO OPPORTUNITY	AGREED INITIALS	
				NEEDS MORE PRACTICE	COMPETENT		TRAINEE	SUPERVISOR
4 & 5	2.1 Interpret numerical data or symbols in written or printed form.							
4	1.2 Work our numerical information.							